



City of Bristol

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bristol Launches West End Neighborhood Study

Bristol, CT, February 11, 2008 —Mayor Arthur J. Ward announced today that an in-depth planning study of the City's West End neighborhood has begun, under the direction of the Bristol Planning Commission and assisted by The Capstan Group and its partner the Yale Urban Design Workshop. The city recently awarded an \$80,000 contract to the New Haven-based consultants to conduct this study. "The West End has always been a vibrant factor in the history of Bristol and should retain that significance in the future," Ward said. "The West End Neighborhood Study will seek out and identify the means for revitalization of this area."

As part of the West End Neighborhood Study – expected to take between 12 and 15 months to complete – The Capstan Group and the Yale Urban Design Workshop will undertake extensive data collection, research and analysis of the West End; reach out to the community for its input and feedback; and work closely with the neighborhood to develop a practical, working document to guide future revitalization efforts there. Work on this study will also take into account the City's ongoing downtown revitalization efforts, as well as activities associated with the extension

of Route 72 into Bristol. The City and The Capstan Group are actively seeking West End residents, business and property owners, and community leaders to participate in this project on all levels.

Just west of downtown Bristol, the West End neighborhood encompasses a 40-block area slightly less than half a square mile in size. Park Street, Divinity Street, Gridley Street, and West Street serve as the major thoroughfares within the study area, which also contains Rockwell Park, Muzzy Field, and a portion of the Pequabuck River. In addition to a highly urbanized residential area, the neighborhood is home to several churches, an elementary school, and a number of small businesses.

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In 2006, the city's focus on the importance of the long-term stability of the West End neighborhood sharpened, and the city identified the need for a comprehensive study of the neighborhood as a critical first step in this effort. The city issued a Request for Qualifications in September 2007 and received ten proposals in response to this request. A selection committee interviewed four firms and recommended the partnership of The Capstan Group and the Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW) as the firms to bring the community together to develop a vision and plan for the neighborhood.

Both The Capstan Group and YUDW bring their significant experience with neighborhood planning projects to the West End study. The Capstan Group (www.cpstn.com) specializes in economic and community development, and works with municipalities, non-profit development community-based organizations, and private developers to bring economic development projects to completion. Recent and current projects include the redevelopment of 750,000 square feet of former industrial space in Science Park in New Haven; the Shartenberg Project in New Haven, a \$160 million new mixed-use project with more than 400 residences in a 31-story tower; and planning processes in two Bridgeport neighborhoods to develop neighborhood revitalization zone plans.

The Yale Urban Design Workshop (www.architecture.yale.edu/UDW) is a community design center founded in 1992 and based at the Yale School of Architecture. The YUDW has worked with communities all across Connecticut, providing planning and design assistance on projects ranging from comprehensive plans and community visions to the design of public spaces, streetscapes, and individual community facilities. It has led recent community planning processes in New Britain, North Branford, Bridgeport, Old Saybrook, Bethany, Ansonia, and the Dwight neighborhood in New Haven.

For more information on the West End Neighborhood Study or to get involved, contact The Capstan Group at (203) 785-0130 or the Bristol Land Use Office at (860) 584-6225. A project website, which will be updated regularly with the latest study information, is expected to be online by March 1, 2008; it will be located at www.cpstn.com.

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